## REMARKS

### Summary of the Office Action

Claim 1 is considered in the Office action.

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Smith U.S. Patent No. 6,441,920 ("Smith") in view of Laverty et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,559,966 ("Laverty").

### Reply to Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Amended claim 1 recites a raster image processing (RIP) software application adapted for use on a networked computer coupled to a plurality of networked printers, the software application adapted to receive a print job, parse the print job into one or more print pieces, load balance the print pieces among the printers based on color use and print speed, and provide a list of all of the printers that received the print pieces. Neither of the cited references describe or suggest such a method.

Instead, Smith describes a system 32 that includes front end computers 40 coupled via computer network 35 to image servers 42, raster image processors ("RIPs") 34, print drives 41 and output devices 46. (FIG. 1; Col. 5, lines 21-23; Col. 5, lines 57-58; Col. 6, lines 10-14). Image server 42 receives and stores images from front end computers 40, and may queue print jobs for immediate transmission to an available RIP 34, or may store images for later processing by RIP 34. (Col. 5, lines 58-61). RIPs 34, which may be software or hardware RIPs, receive PDL files either from front end computers 40 or image servers 42 via network 35. (Col. 5, line 66 through Col. 6, line 12). RIPs 34 provide raster data to output manager (print drive) 41, which either stores the raster data or immediately sends the data to an output device 46. (Col. 6, lines 28-31).

Other than describing a networked printing system, Smith is irrelevant to the claimed invention. Indeed, as the Office action concedes, unlike the claimed invention, Smith does not describe or suggest a software application adapted to receive a print job, parse the print job into one or more print pieces, load balance the print pieces among a plurality of networked printers based on color use and print speed, or provide a list of the printers that received the print pieces.

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Nevertheless, the office action cites Laverty as supplying the pieces missing from Smith. Laverty, however, also does not describe or suggest the claimed invention, and also is irrelevant to the claimed invention. Laverty describes an Internet-based print ordering system. (Col. 10, line 65 through Col. 11, line 3). One component of the system is farm service processing unit 414, which includes master farmer service 602. (Col. 13, lines 49-50; FIG. 4). A client 620 provides tasks or jobs, such as files, to master farmer service 602 for processing. (Col. 14, lines 24-27). Master farm service 602 is coupled to farm service 606, which is coupled to field modules 608 and 610, which communicate with specific plot modules 612 and 614-618, respectively. (Col. 13, line 56 through Col. 14, line 3; FIG. 9). As each task or file is received, master farm service 602 distributes the task or file to a farm service, and then to a field module, and then to a plot module, which is a processor that processes a file or task. (Col. 14, lines 3-15; Col. 14, lines 28-35).

Master farm service 602 serves as a central load balancing area, and the farm system including master farm service 602 and farm services 606 and 640 is designed to load balance file processing tasks. (Col. 15, lines 28-31; Col. 15, line 56 through Col. 16, line 9). Processing tasks (e.g., converting a PostScript file to a PDF file) are performed on one or more farm machines or servers. (Col. 15, lines 46-47; Col. 15, lines 60-61). Unlike the claimed invention, however, Laverty does not describe or suggest a software application adapted to receive a print job, parse the print job into one or more print pieces, load balance the print pieces among a plurality of networked printers based on color use and print speed, and provide a list of the printers that received the print pieces. Instead, Laverty only describes load balancing print processing tasks amongst a plurality of processors, and printing entire print jobs on printing press 448. (Col. 12, lines 56-64).

Because neither Smith nor Laverty, alone or combined, do not describe or suggest the claimed invention, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the § 103(a) rejection of claim 1.

## Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, applicants submit that this application, including amended claim 1, is allowable. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner allow this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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